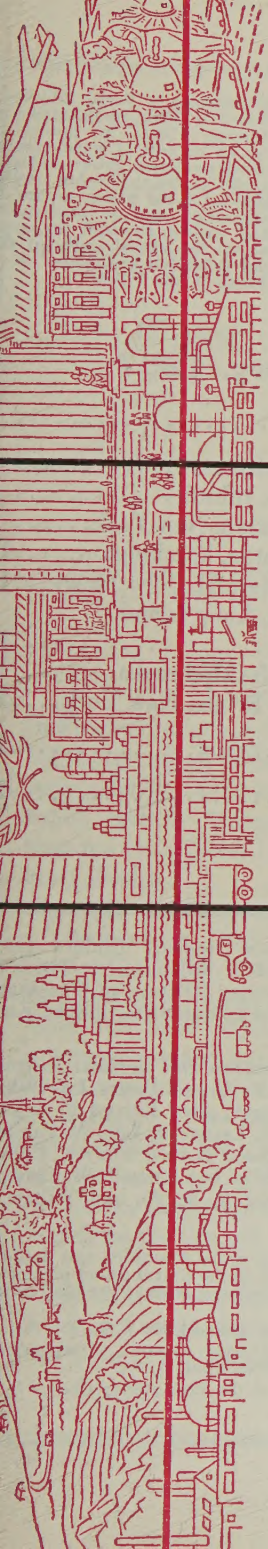

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SOCIAL PROGRESS

Instrumentalities of Faithfulness

Vol. XLVII, No. 5

SOCIAL PROGRESS

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From This Vantage Point...

INTRODUCTION

THE latest statistical survey of racial "integration" in Presbyterian churches was completed in 1954 on data gathered in 1950. According to that survey, of 2,706 responding churches, 832 were racially "inclusive." Probably only 35 to 50 of these could be called racially "integrated." That this picture has significantly changed since then, both extensively and intensively, no one seriously doubts.

The January, 1955, issue of SOCIAL PROGRESS ("Segregation on Sunday") let five churches speak for themselves about their own fluid and creative racial patterns. Symbolic of the change in recent years, this issue contains seven "new" narratives of the churches' movement toward a color-blind fellowship in Christ. Each one different, each one significant, each one still in process, these churches are but a few of the many that have discovered for themselves both how formidable the man-made barriers *appear*, and how vulnerable they really *are* to the power of the Spirit working through leaders who do not temporize or vacillate in their determination to help the Church be the Church.

While those who take the lead in seeking a fellowship that knows Christ, not color, have no illusions about the ultimate Source of growth in grace, they would also recognize the importance of the

instrumentalities of faithfulness. That is to say, the Spirit uses *means* to achieve his ends in the Church, and these means are sometimes distressingly (to the romanticist) prosaic.

This issue of SOCIAL PROGRESS is concerned with these means also because, as history abundantly testifies, the means employed frequently have a strong and disturbing tendency to result in radically different ends than those originally sought. In our concern with means (or "the instrumentalities of faithfulness") we are indebted to the "secular" social scientists, who have frequently been wiser than "the children of light," and who have been, perhaps unconsciously, the channels of God's revelation to the world. We acknowledge, particularly for this issue of SOCIAL PROGRESS, our debt not only to the pastors who authored the following narratives, but also to John P. Dean and Alex Rosen for the insights they have made available in their *Manual of Intergroup Relations.*

The SEA Staff

The Instrumentalities of Faithfulness

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Chicago, Illinois

By Harold Leonard Bowman, Minister

THE social frontier of the inner city today presents problems as bristling, and opportunities as exciting, as did the geographical frontier of a century and a quarter ago. The First Presbyterian Church of Chicago has faced the hazards on both of those frontiers. It was founded in 1833, in the carpenter shop of Fort Dearborn, when Chicago was an unincorporated settlement of three hundred people. Now, in 1957—a hundred and twenty-four years later—it cherishes that pioneer heritage as it serves a changing, challenging community.

The church is located in a thickly populated South Side area known as Woodlawn, which adjoined the Columbian Exposition of 1893. Some of the buildings date from that era. When the church built a large Gothic sanctuary and commodious church house in 1938, the membership was 2,264, scattered over the southern part of the city. The most reliable counsel gave assurance that the population would remain approximately the same for fifty years. The restrictive covenants that were written into all deeds and leases seemed to give support to that assumption.

In 1948, the Supreme Court declared that restrictive covenants were unenforceable. Negroes who lived in the area immediately west began moving into Woodlawn. Today, in the square mile in the center of which First Church is located, there live over 60,000 persons, three fourths of them Negro and one third of them under twenty-one.

It is significant that this rapid change in population has occurred with no violence or rioting. The old property owners' league which upheld the restrictive covenants was replaced by a new community organization fostering an inclusive neighborliness. Rents have risen unmercifully, making it necessary for families to live together. Many

Negroes have purchased their own homes and co-operate in block organizations to uphold community standards.

As soon as this change began, we undertook at First Church a process of education; in sermons and prayers, and in our weekly paper, we sought to create an atmosphere in which the situation could be viewed in a Christian light.

In 1949, the session authorized the appointment of a committee to study the changing community and the church's future. After the careful consideration of various possibilities facing the church, the committee felt that the time had passed when a Christian church could desert a needful field because it chose not to meet that need. It was unanimously recommended that First Church remain in its present location and serve the community.

To move would have taken action by the congregation and the presbytery; to continue to carry on a Christian ministry in our present location required neither. Indeed, we were wisely counseled, by those who had had more experience than we, not to make the question of an inclusive membership a matter of congregational vote.

The only body in a Presbyterian church that decides who shall be a member is the session. Our elders were quite clear. They agreed that when there came before them a person of sincere Christian faith, who had been attending our services long enough to find that this church served his spiritual needs, he should be received, whatever his race might be. A Negro's uniting with the church must be like all accessions, a sincere and spontaneous situation, the new member being known and respected as a Christian person.

For some time there had been Negro children in the church school and Negro attendants at the Sunday morning services. In October, 1953, the first Negro was received into membership. Since that time, we have received other Negroes at every communion service.

We have not tried to make any "mass appeal," nor have we found any "crowding in." We have preferred a natural to a pressured fellowship. We now have over seventy Negro members, in a total membership of 1,430. These have all attended the church for a time and have shared with other new members in preparatory classes. Negroes have been elected to our session, to our board of trustees, and to our board of deacons. They sing in our choir, teach in our church school, participate in all our church activities, and for three years have had a place on our staff. One of the exciting and rewarding outcomes of all this has been to have white folk and Negroes discover how enjoyable and profitable their fellowship can be.

Because we wanted membership to be a gradual growth, we felt the need for a vivid means of demonstrating to the Negro community that the church was not an alien institution in the community, but was seeking to serve the neighborhood; we therefore undertook a weekday community service program. There were enrolled last year almost five hundred young persons. This year we are seeking to broaden these activities and to relate them more closely to the church.

The attitudes of members of the congregation are varied, as is to be expected in a matter in which deep emotional patterns are involved. It is significant that there is no open, active, or organized opposition to what is happening. While the changing community and the trend toward the suburbs have reduced our membership, it is estimated that only about twenty-five persons have taken their membership elsewhere because they are unwilling to remain in a church in which there are Negroes. It is generally recognized by our people that we are doing the Christian thing in this situation and many of them are enthusiastic about our doing it. A wholesome and encouraging fact is that the pledges for 1957, made on Loyalty Sunday in November, show an average increase of almost nine dollars.

Two things should be noted. Since we have established an inclusive Christian fellowship we have ceased talking about it. We find that our Negro members like this, for they feel less self-conscious than when the preacher keeps pleading for better race relations. Also, we do not use the word "interracial." We believe that the word "Christian" ought to mean that! If necessary, we use, rather, the terms "integrated" or "inclusive."

We have a dual obligation: not only to serve those who live within the sound of our chimes, but also to serve our scattered South Side membership, whose loyalty and support are necessary to keep the chimes ringing. This means that we must maintain a service of dignity and beauty, such as the church has offered in the past. We are aware that there are many folk, both white and Negro, who prefer a different kind of worship. But we find that there are people of both groups to whom such services as ours are uniquely welcome.

So long as this remains an interracial community, we can move along the present lines. That is what we are seeking to do, although we are aware that accessions will be increasingly from the neighborhood. If this should someday become a wholly Negro community and ours a Negro church, it will not be because the newcomers "take over," but because the old-timers slip out from under. We would still have done two significant things: we would have demonstrated the possibility and the rich satisfaction of an integrated fellowship and we would have prepared the way for a continuing, strong Presbyterian church under Negro leadership on the South Side of Chicago.

So Chicago First Church is working, like its founders, on a frontier where difficulties are the portals to adventure and problems are the seamy side of exciting challenge. We constantly remind ourselves that "a living church is an adventurous church. There is undoubtedly new light to break forth, but it is only in a free and daring church that this light is likely to be acknowledged. Much of the strength of a living church lies in its flexibility, its constant adaptation to new situations. We do not know the long future, but the immediate lines of advance are fortunately clear."

As Camillo phrased it in *The Winter's Tale,* First Church is engaging in

"A wild dedication of [itself] . . .
To unpath'd waters, undream'd shores,"

but with confidence that God will show the path and confirm the goal.

DURYEA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Brooklyn, New York

By Myron P. Douglass, Minister

WHEN I walk the block of well-kept brownstones between the church and my home, I usually run the gantlet of playing children. Black and white, most of them call out their greetings, and the little Chinese girl at the corner rushes up to throw her arms around her pastor. It was not always like this.

Our fine granite edifice stands in a rather placid neighborhood near the Brooklyn Public Library, the Brooklyn Museum, and the Botanical Gardens. For several generations residents of the area were predominantly Scandinavian Protestants.

Some years ago several colored families moved in, and some of the residents fled, creating a vacuum into which more Negroes moved. It was our laymen who brought up the subject in session. They decided after very serious discussion that Christ's church belonged to *all* Christians. They made public their decision.

A few Negroes had attended services from time to time. Now one or two who seemed particularly interested were invited to become members. Four of the older members immediately walked out of the church. Two have since returned. The others are now presumably members of an all-white congregation.

Predictions of a heavy Negro influx did not materialize.

We have no count of our colored members, nor do we propose to make one. They may comprise anywhere from 10 per cent to 20 per cent of a Sunday congregation. In our parish the deacons act as ushers. One deacon, a young man who had been outspoken in his racial feelings, has been serving next to a very dark Negro deacon for a year. In due time this Negro will undoubtedly be ordained an elder of our church, certainly not because of his color, but because he is devout, intelligent, and capable. I predict that his election will be unanimous.

Eighteen months ago our choir was reorganized. We have among the members either foreign-born or first-generation Americans of West Indian, Puerto Rican, Philippine, Italian, Irish, Scottish, English, Swiss, Norwegian, Swedish, Welsh, and Armenian extraction. We have a Jewish boy, still not a Christian, whose mother (president of the local Hadassah) introduced herself to me at a public gathering recently and expressed her pleasure at the interest shown in her son. We also have several Negro Americans.

I seldom preach on racial topics. Rather than embarrass our Negro members by singling them out in this way, we prefer to set a pattern of real acceptance on a person-to-person

basis. Several months ago the ladies of the Women's League invited the wife of our colored deacon to attend their meetings. So far as I know, this is the first invitation of its kind. But it was their very own. No one suggested it to them.

Our West Indian people make the easiest adjustment. They have no experience of segregation behind them. We have no adult Puerto Rican members as yet. The language barrier has not been a problem for the Puerto Rican youngsters in the church school. Our teachers are all young people, and are oriented to develop the individuality of each child. Response from these children has been very good. The same is true for our one Chinese child, whose parents do not speak English, and are presumably Buddhist.

I would hardly call ours an *integrated* church. Not yet. Perhaps in eight or ten years, when the children now in the church school grow up into adult membership accepting our inclusiveness, we will be truly integrated. The biggest barrier now is "hidden prejudice"—the kind people do not know that they have. There is *talk* of equality, but still a hesitation to extend more than the perfunctory smile and handshake on the part of many.

I think that these factors have made our adjustment easier than it will be in some other situations:

1. We are the only Protestant church in this immediate neighborhood. There is no competitive element. We naturally tend to draw people of many backgrounds who live nearby.

2. We were originally a branch mission of a larger parish. We have never had the element of *class*-consciousness that many larger, more well-to-do parishes have.

3. Certain areas of new and expensive apartments act as a stabilizing factor, making it unlikely that our neighborhood will "go colored" in the foreseeable future. We are ideally situated for an inclusive membership without any one group "taking over."

As an expression of our interest, session has taken membership in the local NAACP chapter, though we are not active. Many of our guest soloists have been Negroes. An accomplished young Puerto Rican choir gave a successful concert in our sanctuary.

We have never rolled out the welcome mat for any particular group. We do not plan to do that. We have tried to make ours a friendly parish church where everyone is equally welcome in Christ's name. We do not flatter ourselves that we have been brilliantly successful, but we are glad to report that some progress is being made.

Acknowledgments

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Prejudice and Your Child, by Kenneth B. Clark. The Beacon Press, 1955.

Manual of Intergroup Relations, by John P. Dean and Alex Rosen. Copyright, 1956, the University of Chicago Press.

MADRONA COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Seattle, Washington

By Robert Edison Ryland, Minister

FIFTY years ago a group of Christians built a church at the corner of Thirty-second and E. Marion in Seattle, Washington. The district at that time was a very lovely residential area overlooking Lake Washington. There were many advantages to living in this district, as it is only five to ten minutes from downtown Seattle. Ten blocks away, at the corner of Twenty-second and E. Cherry, there was a church known as the Grace Presbyterian Church. This church was designated as a Negro church. In the course of time leading up to the present, many factors changed the community and set the stage for what we find today in a truly Christian fellowship.

Up to 1941 there were only 5,000 Negroes living in Seattle. After the war and with the increase in employees at the Boeing plant the figure rose to 20,000. Thus the usual pattern became established, with minority people being restricted in their housing and living in one specific area. The Madrona Presbyterian Church felt the result of the panic that comes from misunderstanding and fear. Many of the members moved out of the area and left the once proud and prosperous church with only a few loyal members trying to sustain it.

The Grace Presbyterian Church also found itself at the crossroads of its existence and the decision was made to close the Grace Church, giving the members open letters of membership and hoping to build at Madrona a community church. The Grace Church was closed in April, 1952.

When I arrived in July of 1954, the situation was as follows: The few loyal followers of Madrona and some who had come over from Grace were holding worship services, and the atmosphere was definitely one of confusion and pessimism with regard to the future. But the opportunity of this church to serve a community was truly golden. It is the only Protestant church in some twenty square blocks. The minority people who moved into the area were homeowners, their children attending the local grammar school and developing a growing sense of pride in their community.

We began our ministry with the conviction that the closer Christians are brought to Jesus Christ the closer they will come to one another. The work was begun by extensive calling and an attempt to find within the church those members whose sense of dedication would give them a zealousness for the community, and in the community those who needed this Christian fellowship desperately.

One of the first parts of the pro-

gram was the coffee hour. This was held two Sunday mornings a month and became a real place of meeting, often for the first time, between the various races. Through our family night, once a month, we began our education program to give a larger concept of the church and its mission. We found it necessary also to put our effort into the Sunday school and into the youth program. Here we had help in that the National Missions Board had provided for a youth worker who could assist in this field.

One of the high lights of the work has been our men's club. A group of very dedicated and deeply consecrated men began meeting one Sunday morning a month for the purpose of fellowship, prayer, and the sharing of problems and blessings of their Christian life.

The women of the church also rose to the task of building a fellowship and have begun in a marvelous way to seek through the Women's Association the local and national fellowship so vitally needed.

All the groups of the church, including the choir, the usher board, the elders, the women's groups, and the men and the couples' club have been major factors in providing the beginning of a fellowship which has witnessed and continues to witness to the community that this is truly a community church.

Each Sunday morning, when I look out upon the congregation and see persons from some twenty-two different racial and national backgrounds worshiping together, I can only say with the apostle Peter, "Truly I perceive that God shows no partiality." I have come to find that the integrated church should never be considered the abnormal, as this would imply that the exclusive church which limits its membership is the normal. We have found that Christian fellowship is not an ideal which we must realize, but is a reality which brings judgment if not participated in.

Is there a special technique that creates an interracial church? Is there some special training or set of books that is a prerequisite to this ministry? If there are such books or if there is such a course I'm anxious to know, because I have found that when the church, meaning the people, is allowed to exist as the household of God, then it can go out into the world to bear witness to the living Christ without restrictions or artificial man-made barriers in regard to its membership.

In two short years the benevolence giving has gone from $190 the first year to $2,400 at the close of this year. We now have 189 members where we had 60 the first year. Although the world looks at numbers, the thing often overlooked in this situation is that it puts before every Christian fellowship the fact that the integrated church is not only a possibility but a reality, and again the exclusive church puts before the minds of its community and the nation a contradiction that borders on hypocrisy.

WEEQUAHIC PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Newark, New Jersey

By Richard A. Couch, Minister

No one here feels there is anything special about our being an integrated church. There was no crisis, no momentous decision.

It was clear when I came, almost two years ago, that genuine integration was an essential part of a meaningful ministry in this neighborhood. An urban residential area with a mixture of attractive single-family homes and more numerous multiple dwellings, our neighborhood was receiving an increasing influx of Negroes. Fortunately, many Negro children were already participating in the Sunday school program, and one Negro family was recorded on the church roll.

Negro children had begun coming to the Sunday school in appreciable numbers about three years previously, apparently very much as a matter of course in an interracial neighborhood. The one Negro family on the church roll had been introduced by the previous pastor, Rev. Theodore Rosche, as a very natural sequence to their close connection with the Sunday school and the mother's active interest in our youth program. At the time emotional reaction was registered among some officers, but it was never seriously doubted that the family's sincere desire to unite with Christ's Church should be honored.

Our desire to minister to all people seemed thus officially established; but it became clear during my initial calling that some members still harbored strong reservations with regard to integration. Obviously the apprehensive question in many minds was whether I was "going to bring more Negroes in."

Though my convictions regarding Christ's Church had been made clear to the pulpit committee, it seemed wise not to seize every opportunity to defend singlehanded the cause of integration. People who interrogated me persistently discovered where I stood; but I preferred rather to interrogate them: "Who is the Church for?" "How do you decide who should belong?" "What would the mind of Christ be?" "How would you go about telling someone he could not belong?"

The integration that has taken place within the last year has all proceeded within the context of our normal church program; it has never been faced as a separate issue. In a survey of nonchurch parents of Sunday school children, six people, including three Negroes, were located with an interest in church membership. In the case of both Negroes and whites, they needed nothing more than a friendly invitation in Christ's name. All six attended a series of

membership classes. All were received by the session and later made public professions of their faith. One Negro boy from the Sunday school was received into membership at the same time, following completion of communicant training.

There were, no doubt, private misgivings about Negroes when the survey was undertaken and when the contents of our net were disclosed; but no one could formulate a good reason "why not," so any misgivings were kept silent. It is likely that some who should have participated in the survey did not because they feared the results; but this had no serious effect on the survey itself.

In the fall of 1955 a junior high Westminster Fellowship was formed. Because of the racial make-up of that age group in our Sunday school, the group was predominantly Negro. Previous youth groups, under the leadership of the former pastor, had also included Negroes. Half the new officers, including the president, were Negroes. Some of the white girls, apparently under strong parental pressure, felt ill at ease in this new role as members of a minority group. Consequently the group is now confined to Negro and white boys, with Negroes still predominating. The ease with which they accept one another has undoubtedly been developed by their associations in our integrated Boy Scout troop.

Fortunately there has always been a substantial segment of opinion in favor of a church for "whosoever will." The members with such convictions were not inclined to be as articulate as others, but their presence on the official boards meant that no real doubt was ever raised about what kind of church we were to be.

I carefully avoided suggesting that we were supposed to take an official position on integration. All our planning simply assumed that we were to be an inclusive church. Ample opportunity was given for session members to raise questions about our course, for we discussed what were likely to be the experiences of the new Negro members and what, if anything, the session should do to make the integration easier. But dissenters were never expressly encouraged to raise their voices as would have been the case if we had called for a vote: Shall we, or shall we not, be an integrated church? The burden of proof lay implicitly on any who might choose to differ with the view customarily held by the Church during its twenty centuries and explicitly maintained by all the major denominations.

Interestingly enough, those who harbored prejudice against Negroes seemed to sense that theirs was the burden of proof. Though some could, I understand, express their prejudices quite strongly in private, no one was able to find a legitimate way to urge them publicly or to recommend any action. Whatever opposition I encountered personally took likewise a defensive vein: "I know you're really right, but—" or, "I suppose this is the *Christian* way to look at it, but—"

Those most in favor of integration have not always proved as helpful in achieving it. They have sometimes exaggerated reports of the prejudice of other church members. They have sometimes raised the "race problem" in unnatural and tactless ways. Neu-

tral or prejudiced members have sometimes "soured" on the matter because of the racial "hobby horse" which some integrationists rode.

It has become increasingly clear that arguing in the abstract is often useless and sometimes dangerous. People who would be incapable of hurting a Negro by an unkind word or gesture, have been led in the ardor of argument to speak words of calculated malice. People who have been reported as definitely anti-Negro have behaved beautifully when confronted with a real live Negro! The friendly hand and the welcoming smile somehow cannot be withheld in the name of Christ. Actual experience in brotherhood is worth a hundred indisputable arguments.

At present there are just six Negroes on our roll of 127; two more are receiving instruction in the membership class. Our Sunday school of seventy-five is approximately 40 per cent Negro; its staff of fourteen includes two Negroes. Our youth work is predominantly among Negro boys. There are no Negro women in our Ladies Aid, but for normal reasons none of our Negro women has yet felt inclined to join. Strong apprehension on the part of some members of the Ladies Aid is reported, but it has never come from women who have taken pains actually to become acquainted with Negro women.

It cannot be denied that there are parts of our hearts and parts of our program that are not yet integrated. By no means all our members welcome present developments. Our social functions have occasionally included Negroes, but there is yet to be built a real mutuality in this area. Nevertheless, what our Church is to be has been firmly established. Our task now is to give warmth and living reality to what is established fact. We have only begun to do that.

No one here feels there is anything special about our integration. There was no battle, no victory. There were no soul-searching decisions. There has been a minimum of courage and cleverness required, a maximum of naïveté. We have, I like to think, just never been clever enough to find a way to stop being the Church of Jesus Christ.

WESTHAMPTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Westhampton Beach, Long Island, New York

By John H. Hendrickson, Minister

TEN of the 365 communicant members of the Westhampton Presbyterian Church are Negroes. Eleven of the 125 children and young people in the church school are Negroes. The first Negro family to become members of this church transferred from St. Augustine's Presbyterian Church in New York City in November, 1954. As a result, this church is now described as an "inclusive" church.

There is nothing really remarkable about what has happened. The same thing has happened in the last decade or so in many previously all-white churches. The same thing will happen in many more in the next few years.

The only justification for setting this event down on paper is to help those churches in which it has not yet happened. In many of them there need be neither fear at the prospect nor any great crusade to bring it about.

The Westhampton Presbyterian Church is just over two hundred years old. It is in a stable community. We do not have "changing neighborhoods" in the usual sense of the term. This is a growing community, but it is too far from New York City to have experienced the rapid growth and rapid change which other parts of Long Island have known. Things do not change quickly in these eastern Long Island communities, and most of the people out here like it that way.

The membership of the church had previously been genuinely representative of the wide variety of people who are in the community. There was the one exception, however. There were no Negroes. That fact troubled some of the officers and members of the church. We wanted to be a truly inclusive church. But we did not want an artificial fellowship to replace the old artificial barrier.

Some years ago this church had operated a "colored mission." That had been a genuine expression of Christian concern appropriate for the times. The next step was the organization of an independent Negro congregation. That too was appropriate for a changing social climate, and that church continues to have a place in the community.

Now the descendants of those who had started the "colored mission" are among those who believe that the days of patronizing support are over and the principle of "separate but equal" has had its day. The obvious next step is an inclusive fellowship.

Yet we in this church did next to nothing to bring Negroes in. Our motives were mixed. On the credit side, we did not want to do anything to harm the present Negro church; in practical terms its only real potential is the Negro community and there are too few of them as it is to support a full church program on their own. Moreover, we did not want an artificial fellowship. But there were other factors too which probably affected our inactivity: the reluctance to face the issue before it was presented to us, and a generally weak evangelistic program as regards all people of the community.

For these various reasons, we did not actively try to bring Negroes into the church. We knew they would be welcome if they came. But we did nothing.

A Negro family moved to our community from New York where they had been members of a predominantly Negro Presbyterian church. They sought out the Presbyterian church here. The children continued their study of the Faith and Life curriculum. From the start, in all important respects, this was the church where they felt at home. Their transfer of membership followed as naturally as with any other newcomers to the community and to the church.

Two other families followed within the year, in much the same way. All of them have taken their place in the life of the church as naturally as any other new members. They have met with neither discrimination nor favoritism.

That is our experience. We do not want to advertise it. We cannot congratulate ourselves for it. If our experience has relevance for others, it is in this: that there may be communities like this where we can hinder rather than help if we make integration a "social action crusade." We can be resurrecting a problem in people's minds which has already been settled. In such situations, there is no great issue unless we make it.

I do not imply that there is no racial prejudice in this community, or in this church. I do mean that even those who harbor deep prejudice at least realize that they cannot justify segregation *in the church*. They may well continue the fight on other fronts.

Meanwhile, most of those within the church are expecting that the church's fellowship shall be an inclusive fellowship. They recognize that all are one in Christ. They may be wanting in evangelistic zeal. But at least they stand ready to offer their Christian friendship without fear or favor.

Perhaps it is not a flattering thing to say, but I believe the members of this church will agree that they are not more pious or devout, or more zealous in the practice of the Christian life, than American Presbyterians generally. But do not underestimate the Christianity of the average American Presbyterian. For most of them, it is only right to assume that they know that segregation on Sunday contradicts their faith and they are altogether ready to see it ended in practice.

CALVIN MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Omaha, Nebraska

By Charles E. Tyler, Minister

THE story of Calvin is the story of two churches, one white and the other Negro. Let us look at the two churches, both located in what is called the Near Northside of Omaha, Nebraska. The one, Bethany, served a white congregation, and the other, Hillside, served a Negro congregation.

Bethany in 1918 was a "German-speaking" congregation, but when the Government made it difficult for them to continue as a German-speaking church certain changes were noted in the congregation. In fact, it is the feeling of many that it was this factor that started the church toward its closing. Each year the membership became smaller. Two or three times in ten years, the Presbytery of Omaha tried to get the congregation to merge with other

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Social Progress subscriptions (cont'd)

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white congregations, but each time a majority of the group prevailed and the merger never took place. In 1952-1953 an intern student from McCormick, Mr. Richard Athey, came to the church to work for a year. Mr. Athey realized that the "white community had moved from around the church"; therefore he sought ways and means to include other children and adults in the congregation. Time was too short for him to do a finished job, but the idea of "brotherhood" had been born and someone else was to bring it to completion. When Mr. Athey left, Rev. Franklin King came to work at Bethany on a part-time basis, and he continued the idea that had been started by Mr. Athey, so that by April, 1954, Bethany was ready to unite with Hillside. Meanwhile, let us see what was happening to Hillside.

Hillside was organized as a "Negro Presbyterian church" in 1920. At that time it was called St. Paul's. In 1935 it had its first fire and bought a building from the Hillside Congregational Church in Omaha, but by 1946 it was hardly able to maintain itself, even with help from the Board of National Missions. By then things were so bad that the Presbytery of Omaha asked Dr. G. Lake Imes, working for the Interboard Council, to come and make a study of the situation. At the close of the study, Dr. Imes recommended that the congregation be given another chance on a five-year basis and that it be supported by the Board of National Missions, the Presbytery of Omaha, and the congregation of Hillside. To this end, Dr. Imes was asked to find a minister, and he persuaded me to come to Omaha. At this time the congregation numbered a little more than thirty members. Then just before I arrived, the Hillside building, together with the manse, was destroyed by fire. One of the elders wrote, "If ever we needed a pastor, we need him now."

After four or five years of working on a building plan as well as trying to develop a congregation, the combined efforts of the Presbytery of Omaha, the congregation, and the Board of National Missions constructed a new building to continue to serve the "Negro Presbyterians." The new building was dedicated in 1951.

Now let us look at what was happening in the community while Bethany was losing its congregation on the one hand, and while Hillside was constructing a building to take care of Negro Presbyterians on the other. To begin with, the community was gradually changing from white to Negro. At first the move was slow. It was so slow that it was predicted that none of the Negroes would be in any of the "white churches" in this generation. Within five years, the situation had changed completely—so much so that almost every week a Negro congregation was asking a white congregation to "sell" to them.

About this time, the Presbytery of Omaha requested the Board of National Missions to make a study of the Presbyterian churches in Omaha. The study was made by Dr. Everett L. Perry. In the study Dr. Perry found "a most unusual concentration" of Presbyterian churches on the Near Northside—Bethany (German white), Covenant (white), North (white), and Hillside (Negro). All the churches were within

a radius of one square mile. Dr. Perry stated that "some long-range plan for the alleviation of this clustering should be started."

In the light of the study, the North congregation asked permission to move to the northwest part of the city. The request was granted, and in the days that followed the North congregation received an offer for its building from a Negro congregation of another denomination. The amount was $55,000. There was a strong feeling in presbytery that if this happened it would hinder the work of the Hillside Church, so the presbytery offered the North congregation $55,000 for its building to be the church home of Hillside and Bethany. Part of the money for the purchase was to come from the sale of Hillside and Bethany—the rest from other sources.

At this point the Board of National Missions was invited to give counsel in the matter. Members of the Board of National Missions recommended that the Hillside congregation and the Bethany congregation (both receiving National Missions help) try to work out a merger. It should be noted that the two congregations were to work out the merger, and if they could make it presbytery would then give support and guidance. Let us look at some of the activities of the "courtship" between Hillside and Bethany:

a. The pastors of Hillside and Bethany exchanged pulpits.

b. The pastors of Hillside and Bethany, plus the choirs, made an exchange, each observing the other's order of service.

c. The two churches then worked out exchange programs, having the Christmas program at Bethany and the Easter program at Hillside.

d. The two sessions held joint meetings.

e. The Bethany Church was invited as a church to worship at Hillside.

f. The usher boards got together to work out a system for ushering.

By this time the joint sessions were ready to call a congregational meeting for the purpose of asking the Presbytery of Omaha to dissolve the congregations of Hillside and Bethany. The meeting was called—the largest meeting ever held by either congregation—and the action was taken. One elder from Hillside voted against the merger. He stated that he was opposed to the move because the new congregation was going to occupy the North building and it would be too large for so small a group (171).

A committee was appointed by the combined congregations to "study a name for the new church." All kinds of names were suggested to the committee, and at last they were ready to make a report. A congregational meeting was called and the committee suggested three names—Faith, St. Andrew's, and Calvin. I had heard that this would be the beginning of the end, and that we could never hope to get a congregation to agree on one name. Trying to avoid trouble, I asked the congregation which name they wanted to vote on first and someone moved that it be Calvin. I had no sooner said the word "Calvin" than the congregation stood up as one man. Later I found out that most of the members were tired of "geography" names like "Benson West," "Third," "First,"

and so on. They wanted a church name, and they could think of no better one than Calvin.

At this point the new congregation was without a pastor, so a meeting was called to secure a pastor. Here again the congregation voted as one for the service of Rev. Charles E. Tyler. The presbytery consummated the whole transaction on April 18, 1954, and the two congregations became one, known as the Calvin Memorial Presbyterian Church. By this time others had been attracted by the idea of worshiping in a church without racial barriers, so that among the charter members were Negroes, Caucasians, Orientals, and later an Indian family. Thus we were established as an inclusive church in Omaha—one of the first.

The program at Calvin when it was organized called for a dual ministry, Negro and white, but our resources made this program impossible, and we therefore introduced a white program assistant. When she left to be married, we received a retired minister, Dr. C. Carson Bransby, on a part-time basis. Dr. Bransby gave special attention to visitation, checking on the newcomers in the community and submitting to the session the prospective members. In return the session organized into a committee on evangelism, and we make monthly calls on these prospective members. So far, membership-wise, this hasn't added very much, but the good that Dr. Bransby has done toward making Calvin more acceptable in the white community is outstanding. It does not yet appear what the total leadership of Calvin will be, but more leadership is needed.

Let us look now at what has happened to Calvin since 1954. From an administrative standpoint, I would say that the first year was "sickening." Everyone was much too "nice" to everyone else, and as I look back on it I am quite sure that neither group wanted to "start anything." Along toward the end of the first year, people became more "normal" and started to act as good church people ought to act—to say what they didn't like and work out the differences. We noticed that each group had "customs" that they liked but wanted to hold back before trying to make them a part of the "new" church. The Hillside group had gone many years without a "constitution" or without becoming "incorporated." The Bethany group were acquainted with a constitution and articles of incorporation; therefore at the end of the year these things came to the forefront. A committee was appointed and came in with a fine constitution and articles of incorporation. Following the counsel of some of the presbyters, I tried to get the congregation to adopt a clause in the constitution that would insure some of the minority (white) of being on the official boards of the church.

The congregation was unanimous in its statement that "they wanted no law to make them do what was the Christian thing, and that for a person to serve on a board he had only to qualify." This was two months before election, and I had been told that the Negroes would vote the white people out of office. I was thrilled when the election was over and each of the boards—elders, trustees, and deacons —had at least one white person on it, and some Negroes as well as some white people had lost in the first election.

At this writing we seem to have settled down to being good church members, and seldom is any reference made to the race question, but rather to what a man can do. This may become practical rule.

Now let us take a look at the community in which Calvin is located, and the challenge that it presents. Before the North Presbyterian Church moved out of the neighborhood, there were seven established white congregations in the community. At this writing, all but one have moved out or are planning to move out. One of the churches sold its building to the school board, and thus it will not be used as a church any longer. The others are still trying to sell to "Negro" congregations. The Bethany building was sold to the Volunteers of America and the Hillside building was sold to the Y.W.C.A. Thus, Protestant leadership and influence are becoming weaker due to the accelerated migration of white congregations to other neighborhoods.

This means that the Calvin Church congregation is experiencing disorganizing and disturbing factors that make good church programing difficult. To this end, the Calvin congregation conducted a survey among its members to see what kind of program should be carried on. The survey was conducted by Dr. George Wilbur, Dr. George Peck of the University of Omaha, and Mr. Philip Vogt, administrator of the Douglas County Welfare Bureau. After a year of study and research, the Calvin congregation submitted to the Presbytery of Omaha a program of five and one half days per week including such services as: day-care service for children of working mothers; a wide range of activities for youth including supplementary recreation, counseling, crafts; arrangements for part-time religious instruction; special attention to the care of the aging. To do all this would call for remodeling of the building in the amount of $48,000.

To date, presbytery is working on a plan that will help Calvin do the job that is needed in the community. The resources of leadership and finances are not in the community; therefore help must come from the outside. So the story of Calvin is still in the making.

SOUND VIEW PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Bronx, New York

By Robert M. Davidson, Minister

In the face of a continuing influx of Negroes and Puerto Ricans into the once all-white community of Clason Point, Sound View Presbyterian Church is planning to do what many churches have done before—relocate. However, the hoped-for relocation will not be a flight to the segregated suburbs but a move to a more central position in the present

community in order to serve better the total community.

Sound View Church Sunday school has been at least nominally integrated for fourteen years. For nine years Negroes have been members. The first Negro member came to the church through the Sunday school and the confirmation class of 1947. Two years later the sister of the first member joined in the same way. The first adult Negro members joined in 1950. In 1953, when the writer was called as pastor of Sound View there were two Negro boys in the confirmation class. At the time of confirmation one of the parents of these boys joined along with other parents of confirmands.

So far as I can determine, no decision was ever made by the session to accept Negroes into membership. It was just assumed that Negro candidates for membership would be received on the same basis as others.

In the fall of 1954, the 1,250-family Sound View Houses were opened. As the nearest Protestant church we saw a responsibility to serve the families of that public housing project as an opportunity for a significant inclusive fellowship. Our Sunday school enrollment has risen sharply ever since that time, and while our membership growth has been less steep, it has been steady. Of the 128 new members in the last three years, about 80 have been Negroes. Almost all our Sunday school growth (doubled in three years) has been from Negro children in the project. Although the project is only 30 per cent Negro, most of the white families are Roman Catholic or Jewish, so that it has been the Negro families who have most readily responded to our evangelistic efforts. Increasingly Negro families have been purchasing homes in the community, and we look forward to greater growth among these new residents.

There has been little open friction during the process of integration. The strongest church families, both Negro and white, have found the last few years a rich experience as social barriers crumpled within the Christian fellowship. Some of the peripheral families that we have lost may have severed their ties because of the inclusive fellowship, but this has never been given as the reason. A strong session of dedicated elders, seeing the Christian imperative, has never wavered in charting the direction of the congregation's growth. When it was necessary to hire a new organist about two years ago, the session unanimously voted to hire our first Negro staff person. This was not a conscious effort to have an integrated staff, but the hiring of a well-qualified organist who was a Negro.

In a relatively small congregation undergoing rapid growth there is always a desperate need for lay leadership. Clason Point has always been a mobile community, and our officer turnover through removals has been high. Therefore the election of Negro officers was more rapid than might have occurred in a more stable community. Negroes are in lay leadership positions as elder, deacons, church treasurer, president of the men's fellowship, president of the high school fellowship, and secretary of the women's group. It seems probable that at our next annual meeting in January, more Negro officers will

be elected. Negro officers are looked upon as representatives not of our Negro membership, but of our whole membership, elected because of a willingness and ability to serve.

Another ethnic group coming into our community is the Puerto Ricans. Our session is anxious to begin systematic outreach to these new residents of the community. However, with limited budget and staff this opportunity for the growth of Christ's Kingdom has so far not been realized. We do have two Puerto Rican youths as members who came through our confirmation class and about fifteen Puerto Rican children in the Sunday school. I have visited at least fifteen Puerto Rican families in the community with Protestant background. Six adults attend our English services occasionally. Most of the others require a service in the Spanish language which we cannot yet provide.

The future of our congregation is clear. We will continue to serve the immediate community and seek to draw into membership and active participation all who seek to follow Christ and fulfill the responsibilities of church membership. Within the next three years four new housing projects will bring 5,000 new families into our neighborhood. About a fourth will be Protestants. Since our Sunday school is bursting at the seams, our need for a new building with larger space for activities and Christian education is clear. We have decided to relocate in a more suitable place to serve the entire community, including the housing projects not yet built. Our New York Presbytery has seen the need, and as a part of its Progress Program is seeking to raise a substantial sum for a new building.

So long as Clason Point remains an integrated community our church will serve on the same basis. We look forward to new opportunities for Christian fellowship, secure in the knowledge that the only event that could alter the nature of our fellowship would be the sudden "panic" exodus of most white families from the community. Such an event is possible, but I am certain that among the last white families to move would be our active church membership.

The experience of fellowship across previous color barriers within our church is actually one of the strongest deterrents to a mass exodus of white residents.

Integration in our congregation has been the result of an understanding of the Christian imperative for continuous evangelism in the church community. Taking our evangelistic responsibility seriously has necessitated the enriching experience of a racially inclusive fellowship.

By H. B. Sissel, Associate Secretary,
Department of Social Education and Action

The Means of Obedience

THERE is little final or established "knowledge" in the field of intergroup relations among either churchmen or social scientists. But there is a significant consensus of "informed opinion" based on experience, which has created a body of working principles on whose general validity most of the trained specialists and practitioners can agree. Some of these working principles are at sharp variance with the assumptions of those of us who have merely deep concern and the best of intentions.

Churchmen and Christians in general have a tendency to think of "the race problem" primarily, if not exclusively, as one of inner attitudes on the part of individuals. Hence the primary (meaning the first, which often turns out to be the only) task is that of *changing these attitudes*. The assumption here is that if the prejudices of enough people can be erased, "the race problem" in all its manifestations will take care of itself.

Generally speaking, specialists in intergroup relations tend to see the problem from a different perspective and approach it from a different angle (or, more accurately, angles). They tend to see no simple cause-and-effect relationship between prejudice and discrimination/segregation. Rather, these three realities, the first one internal, the latter two external, are seen by them in a much more complex, dynamic, and *reciprocal* relationship. If they were forced to state cause and effect (and most would avoid doing so), many would name segregation as a major "cause" of prejudice. Hence, for many race relations specialists the race problem is seen primarily as one of segregation and discrimination. It is not exclusively that, but these externals of behavior, rather than the internals of attitude, are the most vulnerable and viable aspects of the problem with which we must deal. Hence the task becomes one of seeking to change, not attitudes, but situations, not prejudices, but patterns, in which prejudice is born and nurtured.

Such a pointed statement of difference probably runs the risk of being violently attacked from "both sides," and with good reason. It overstates a distinction. Nevertheless, it is imperative that churchmen understand this distinction to a degree that will make it possible for them to discuss it and think creatively about it without "getting emotional." It has profound implications for the Church and the churches, as they face both inward toward their own life as the body of Christ and outward toward the world which they hope to influence.

Prejudice and the Changing of Attitudes

PREJUDICE can be thought of as an acquired attitude or tendency to think and feel about certain persons or situations in a particular, predisposed manner not immediately conditioned by reality. It is extremely complex even to discuss, let alone to attack by either direct frontal assault or indirect educational influence. If we belong to the school that believes prejudice in persons should be the focal point of our attention, it behooves us to be informed in our understanding of it.

If fish could talk, they probably would have no word for water. In a sense, prejudice is comparable to the water in which fish are born, live and die—probably without knowing it. The water is within them and also surrounds them. If one fish tried to discuss the nature of water with his fellows, and if the discussion took place within the medium itself, the likelihood of distortion and misunderstanding would be great. Until fish had the experience of living, if only for a time, in some medium other than water, the possibilities of their developing any real understanding as to the nature of water would be limited.

Our ability to discuss prejudice meaningfully with each other and to develop insight and perceptiveness as to its nature are similarly limited, whether we are white or nonwhite—so long as our efforts to do so take place in a social climate in which at least genteel prejudice prevails. All of us, particularly children, are subtly but powerfully influenced by this social climate. We are born into it, receive from it, and give to it.

In another sense, prejudices (note the plural) are comparable to food preferences or table manners, and are transmitted in much the same way by people who, if they think of them at all, think of them, not as prejudices, but as "normal" and "reasonable" conclusions drawn from their own experiences. That these experiences have usually been confined to associations with people who share similar attitudes, plus superficial and shallow contacts with "the other race" (usually in something other than a deep, mutual friendship between equals), is not recognized. The stereotypes that are communicated in such a way are perpetuated by recognizable differences of color, and thrive where no continuing frank communication takes place across racial lines. The burden of proof rests upon anyone who challenges these stereotypic ways of thinking and feeling, much as it would rest upon anyone who tried to persuade the average American family that not eating sweetbreads (cultural food preference) is missing out on a great delicacy, or that eating with chopsticks (cultural table manner) is superior to eating with fork and spoon.

Prejudice as a psychopathic manifestation (e.g., in the "authoritarian personality," the "scapegoat hunter," or the repressor of tabooed forms of hostility) probably afflicts relatively few and is not a serious threat to society. Further, since it is a subject

for separate concern, it will not be dealt with here. Needless to say, it requires intense psychiatric treatment.

Kenneth B. Clark, in his book *Prejudice and Your Child*, reports a study by Allport and Kramer indicating that 80 per cent of the American people have an appreciable degree of racial prejudice, *verbally expressed*. If such a figure is anywhere nearly accurate, and no known survey has disclosed evidence to the contrary, Clark is probably correct in questioning the approach to prejudice in terms of the individual personality. Other studies indicate that no significant attitudinal or behavioral differences can be shown to exist between students who receive their education in a religious institution and public school students. Still other studies, on the influence of direct efforts to educate for brotherhood through the channels of mass media (e.g., car cards like the one bearing the message: "What's his race or religion got to do with it? He can pitch, can't he?"), indicate that they make their greatest impact on those who need them least and have a negligible effect on the prejudiced, who presumably need them most.

Clark also found that other studies "do not support the view that unprejudiced children are necessarily well adjusted socially and personally. In fact, such children were found to have more open anxieties, 'more conflicts,' and 'more directly faced insecurities.' . . . In a society where prejudice, discrimination, and segregation are the normal social behavior [*sic*], it is questionable whether an individual who does not conform can be wholly adjusted to that society. Nonconformity associated with social sensitivity and creativity may be maintained only at high personal cost." That it is not the business of the Church to produce "adjusted" personalities is not here an issue at stake. But that relatively few individuals are willing to pay the emotional cost of *not* conforming to the existing "normal" social pattern is.

It is thus doubtful that the influences of even the most sophisticated educational literature, exhortation, discussion, and so forth, *by themselves* can offset the powerful social influences exerted by a generally segregated society.

That the Church, *by "education" alone*, can produce within such a society any significant number of unprejudiced people, or effectuate significant changes in the racial patterns of that society, is questionable. In a word, if the general tenor of almost all social research on the subject is valid, *few children and adults who continue to live in segregated neighborhoods, worship in segregated churches, attend segregated schools, work in segregated offices and shops, and associate exclusively with friends of their own race and attitudes are likely to be deeply and permanently influenced in their racial attitudes by posters, stories, lessons, sermons, and expressions of good will.*

Let no inference be drawn that such educational efforts are unessential and should be discontinued. The implication is quite clear that they are inadequate and need to be supplemented. The "situations," the climate, within which they are carried on—neighborhood, church, school,

office—need to be changed in order for them to be really effective. Until this is done, their influence will probably be limited to (*a*) clarifying the thinking of those who are already convinced, (*b*) providing temporary and academic interest to those who don't care, and (*c*) solidifying the prejudices of those who are already opposed.

Segregation and the Changing of Situations

As SUGGESTED before, intergroup relations specialists are not *primarily* interested in changing the racial attitudes of prejudiced individuals, although they are by no means uninterested in these changes. One significant exception needs to be made to this general statement, however. If one is concerned about changing *situations,* the attitudes of certain key persons, power figures, influential leaders, or "gatekeepers," as the professionals call them, is of incalculable importance. A gatekeeper may be "reluctant" without being prejudiced, may actually, though inadvertently, prevent desegregation from taking place while really being in favor of it.

Many people believe that organized opposition, open conflict, even violence, is inevitable if prejudiced persons are brought together in a racially mixed situation. If the leaders or gatekeepers believe this, the practical consequences of their belief will usually be the perpetuation of segregation and therefore of prejudice. It would be helpful if they knew that *most current research runs contrary to their belief in the inevitability of conflict, and that no responsible research bears out their belief.*

The results of much of this research can be, and have been, drawn together in the form of a number of working propositions or principles that are full of implications to the Church and the churches that are determined to be faithful to the gospel and are concerned about the instrumentalities of such faithfulness. Many of these principles, which appear below, have been taken from Dean and Rosen's *Manual of Intergroup Relations* and modified or rephrased in a way to make them more immediately relevant to church situations. The authors of the book should not be held responsible for the particular form in which they have been rephrased, for the order in which they appear, or for any inferences that have been drawn from them.

A first principle, verified by those following, could be stated like this:

(1) *Leaders, especially the pastor, who are in church positions of high prestige and influence, can determine the operating practices of a church and, within broad limits, establish racially inclusive patterns in the congregation. These new patterns, even if they differ from the generally accepted prior patterns, then become the established and accepted customs to which participants conform.*

As in "secular" institutions, "the major determinants in these situations are not the feelings and attitudes of rank-and-file participants

but the policies of strategic persons in authority who are in positions to determine practices" (Dean and Rosen, *Manual of Intergroup Relations*). Even in certain sections of the South, where the social climate strongly opposes desegregation even in principle, the possibilities are usually far greater than is usually estimated from efforts to gauge that opposition by verbal expressions of it on the part of the populace or the congregation. This can be deduced from the successful desegregation of schools south of the Mason-Dixon Line in the face of what appeared to be determined public opposition. In these cases of "successful" desegregation, as in those communities like Mansfield, Texas, where desegregation was halted, *the decisive factor was determination and the absence of vacillation on the part of the leaders.*

Other principles can be stated to help explain why this is true:

(2) *Conformity to the pattern of segregation or inclusiveness is usually quite unrelated to the intensity of prejudice existing in the individuals who conform.*

In practically any given segregated or mixed situation you will find both prejudiced and unprejudiced persons participating. It is a stereotype to say that "white Southerners are prejudiced." Some are and some aren't. "A Southerner who journeys to New York sits on nonsegregated buses, rides on nonsegregated subways, sits in nonsegregated theaters and baseball parks, and perhaps even eats in restaurants where Negroes are being served"—whether he is prejudiced or not. "He may not like these experiences, but he tends to accept them because (1) they are established practices and (2) they are accepted as appropriate by other participants. The individual prejudices of the present participants have little to do with the establishment of practices" (*ibid.*).

This acceptance of nonsegregated patterns has little or nothing to do with the physical intimacy of the relationship. "In the South, Negroes may try on the same dresses as whites in department stores. . . . Many Southerners have close contact with servants who prepare their food, make their beds, even wet-nurse their babies. Thus the converging evidence of practical experience and our extensive research data strongly suggests" (*ibid.*):

(3) *Within wide limits, prejudiced persons will accept and participate in a thoroughly mixed and integrated setting if integrated patterns are established and accepted as appropriate by other participants in that situation*—particularly if the prestige and status persons do so. Studies of segregated institutions across the whole scene of American life—churches, schools, transportation, offices, factories, public accommodations—abundantly document this impressive fact. Where interaction across racial lines takes place, people usually take for granted the appropriateness of a desegregated situation, regardless of their personal feelings about it in the beginning.

(4) *Advance polling of those to be involved in an intergroup change almost always calls forth many more negative reactions than will actually occur if the change is undertaken matter-of-factly without either pub-*

lic fanfare or private vacillation. As the January, 1955, SOCIAL PROGRESS pointed out, the bark of prejudice is much worse than its bite, and white persons generally predict much worse action of themselves in an *anticipated* racial situation than they are actually capable of producing in the situation itself. Pastor Richard Couch reports on page 14 of this issue that "People who have been reported as definitely anti-Negro have behaved beautifully when confronted with a real live Negro! . . . Actual experience in brotherhood is worth a hundred indisputable arguments." The vast majority will undoubtedly "go along with" any racial change that is effectuated, with the implicit assumption that the burden of proof rests upon those who disagree with it—as the testimony of the Church abundantly makes clear. Encouraging premature discussion of specific "what might happen" events precipitates arguments and may force people to make decisions or statements on the basis of unrealistically imagined situations that will never develop. Consideration of contemplated changes at a mass meeting are particularly hazardous, because it is extremely difficult to deal with objections at large public gatherings.

(5) *Desegregation that proceeds firmly, decisively, and matter-of-factly, and is backed by responsible leadership, is more readily accepted and taken for granted than a halting desegregation that appears unsure of itself.* If the minister or members of the church's staff (choir director, for example) appear to be at all hesitant, doubtful, or apologetic, they are inviting difficulties. Attitudes that are indefinite or vaguely expressed by the leaders will encourage persons who are opposed to integration and plant doubts in the minds of those who are unsure of their own feelings.

Despite the turmoil and violence that take place sporadically in certain communities in our country, the obvious social realities of our time point to the increasing acceptance by the American people of a nonsegregated church in a nonsegregated society as the inevitable outcome of the changes now taking place. Even in those areas of the South where resistance has seemed almost monolithic and unanimous, key figures in state governments have admitted privately that the trend can only be delayed, not halted or reversed. In those communities where violence has flared, only a tiny fraction of the white population have participated in it. Where this minority has been permitted to "call the shots," they have won the day (though not the war). But where their opposition has been met firmly and with determination by responsible officials, it has melted away.

Experiences in the churches that have become racially inclusive have been comparable—not identical, since a church is, humanly speaking, a voluntary organization financially dependent upon its membership, which makes it necessary for some membership to remain if that church is to remain. We know that this constitutes no serious problem. Contrary to almost universal popular expectations, disaster has not overtaken those churches that have desegregated their own life. Depending

(*Continued on page 31*)

From A MANUAL OF INTERGROUP RELATIONS,
by John P. Dean and Alex Rosen

Evaluating the Leadership

[Since the personal feeling of the individual members are not decisive factors in determining whether a church (or a community facility) is desegregated, provided the "top leadership" is firmly committed and proceeds effectively, the attitudes, knowledge, and skills of the leader *are* decisive. Once again the Church is in debt to the intergroup relations specialists for their experience and insight.

Dean and Rosen have compiled a "profile" of the characteristics of effectiveness as over against those of naïve good intentions. This profile was intended for use by professional staffs of intergroup relations agencies in their own self-evaluation, but many of the characteristics listed carry over so immediately and obviously to church leaderships, that it has been reproduced verbatim below. The profile is not intended to divide church leaders into two identifiable groups. Most of us will find personal characteristics of our own listed in *both* columns.]

Effective Leader	Less Effective Leader
Attitudes	
a) He is committed to a belief in the workability of integration and consciously devotes his efforts to achieving it	a) He is inclined to be passive and vague about objectives in intergroup relations, opportunistic in moving forward to goals, and willing to believe intergroup relations will improve of their own accord merely if he favors the American Creed
b) He accepts the limitations of the situation and people he must work with; he has a long-range view that is not easily discouraged	b) He tends to internalize or take personally the apathy, disinterest, and resistance he finds; he is inclined to be moralistic about "the minority not appreciating what we do for it"; he is patronizing and often critical of what he sees as their "personal limitations"
c) He is person-centered in his judgments of movement; he cares most what happens to individuals as a result of their intergroup experiences	c) He is program-centered in his judgment; he values the number of participants and the size of the program above the growth of individuals

d) He is aware of how his own background and experience have molded his own intergroup perceptions; he has insight into his own feelings and is aware of the ways his own prejudices are called forth; he does not deceive himself by thinking he is completely unprejudiced	d) He is inclined to think he is completely unprejudiced; he is not aware of the prejudices he has not worked through or how they color his reactions to intergroup situations
e) He is able to identify with and understand the reactions of the individual participants in his program regardless of their race and regardless of their prejudices; he appreciates the felt discomforts and prejudices of minority toward majority and majority toward minority	e) He is inclined to be sentimental in his reactions to the minority and critical or moralistic about both majority and minority prejudices; he thinks in terms of exaggerated, favorable stereotypes; he finds it difficult to individualize his personal relationships with different members of groups other than his own

Knowledge

a) He understands the nature of superficial prejudice, personality-rooted prejudice, and the mechanisms of scapegoating and exemption	a) He tends to confuse prejudice and personality characteristics and does not understand the relationships between them
b) He is aware of the wide diversity of minority experiences and knows what this means in terms of defensive reactions, feelings of discomfort and morbidity, and differential reactions of minority persons to their status	b) He does not appreciate the diversity and intensity of minority experience and is unaware of how many of the "shortcomings" or "limitations" he perceives in minority persons are related to those experiences; he is inclined either to lump all minority persons together or to try to overlook the minority experience by viewing its members as "just like anyone else"
c) He understands the importance of friendly interaction and friendship formation across ethnic lines in reducing prejudice, and he works to increase interaction	c) He tends to assume the inevitability of acculturation and assimilation by the gradual wearing-away of prejudice through education and public enlightenment
d) He has sophisticated knowledge of the processes of social change in intergroup relations, such as how legal sanctions, authority, and social pressure can be used to achieve integration	d) He thinks of change in intergroup relations in terms of crude rules of thumb that hamper him in moving ahead; e.g., "We can't move any faster than the community," or "We won't make any real headway until we reach the parents"
e) He has knowledge about community and extra-community resources that can help him in his intergroup relations work	e) He tends to be insulated or isolated and to feel that his intergroup problems are unique

Skills	
a) He can put a person at ease regardless of his group by relating to each person as an individual, but with sensitivity to that person's special minority or majority experiences; he is at ease himself in interactive situations	a) By making "slips," or using testimonials or stereotypes, he is likely to blunder in interactive situations and reveal his inexperience and lack of understanding of the problems of communication across ethnic lines; he is surprised and indignant when the reaction is negative to his utilization of testimonials as a friendship device
b) He can interpret minority and majority experiences so that they increase the understanding of participants in interactive situations	b) He bypasses interpretation in favor of exhortation to ignore differences and "be one happy family"; he talks in generalities about "unity," "togetherness," "loving our fellow man"
c) He can handle tension incidents so as to (1) give participants increased insight into themselves and other groups and (2) strengthen the climate of opinion for integration	c) He tends to perceive "incidents" as bad and to shy away from anything controversial that might lead to friction; he is confused and embarrassed by incidents and tends to play them down and avoid handling them

THE MEANS OF OBEDIENCE

Continued from page 28

upon local exigencies and the shape and intensity of local social climate, there is good reason to believe that even churches in the deep South could demonstrate the inaccuracy of these popular expectations. However, although there are dozens of "white" churches of many denominations in the Southeast with at least one Negro in their fellowship, it is probably true that such faithfulness is much more costly in the deep South than elsewhere.

The fact that desegregation in the Church's life as a whole has appeared to lag behind desegregation in other institutions has certainly weakened the Church's witness to the faith it proclaims, nevertheless. But now we know that this lag need no longer be tolerated by those who will implement their intentions of faithfulness with the tested instrumentalities of faithfulness. The witness of the Church to the gospel can still be made in its own inner life.

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